



Among the teachings of Islam is that one carry out the tahneek of the newborn child.

Tahneek is for one to soften a date (or any other sweet food) by chewing it until it becomes a paste (so that it is easy for the child to swallow) and to thereafter place it in the mouth of the newborn child. It is preferable that the one carrying out the tahneek be a pious person. There are many ahaadeeth which mention Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) performing tahneek for the children of the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum).

The primary reason for one to carry out the tahneek is that it is the teaching of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). Nevertheless, the practice of tahneek contains numerous physical and health benefits as well.

When the date or sweet substance is placed in the mouth of the child, the child instinctively begins to suck it and chews at it with his gums. This strengthens the muscles, blood vessels and nerves of the mouth and jaw, preparing them in advance for the baby's first feed from the mother. (Tarbiyatul Awlaad fil Islam pg. 77)

On average, one out of every ten premature babies suffers from low blood sugar which sometimes even causes brain damage. In 2013, doctors 'discovered' a remedy that was more effective than the glucose solution normally administered via I.V. drip – dextrose syrup. This sugar-rich syrup is plastered onto the cheek of the child, and by sucking on the syrup, the blood sugar level of the child is maintained. (<http://tinyurl.com/yd6zzemk>)

Little did these doctors realize that through the blessing of Islam and the sunnah, Muslims have adhered to the very same practice, known as tahneek, for over a thousand years!